

BS ENGLISH CAPSTONE PROJECT

Course Code: 6005

Student Manual

Department of English

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

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1. Introduction to the Course

The BS English Capstone Project (Course Code: 6005) is a required capstone course that is intended to tie together learning and career experience. The Capstone Project differs from the BS English Thesis (9081), which focuses on original research investigation and theoretical contribution, in that students are asked to find, analyze, and make suggestions for real-life issues in the fields of English Language Teaching (ELT), Applied Linguistics, Language Policy, Translation Studies, or other professional settings. It provides students with a guided experience to demonstrate the ability to use theory, research and disciplinary skills to solve real-world problems in educational, institutional or community settings.

This course will be used to teach students how to do the actual work of applied research and problem solving. Students should be able to form an appropriate research problem based on practical life examples, approach the existing literature critically, select appropriate research methods and present their analysis of data/text material compactly, academically and professionally appropriate. The objective of the course is to provide students with an opportunity to link theory (either linguistic, literary, cultural, or applied linguistic) with systematic analysis of real-world problems so as to provide a linkage between classroom types of instruction and independent study and investigation in the profession at large.

It is expected that students will be able to attain a range of learning outcomes on successful completion of the capstone project. These include the ability to formulate specific research aims and questions, directed towards practical problem solving; the ability to evaluate relevant literature critically; the ability to apply suitable research methods in a real world problem-solving situation; the ability to follow existing academic conventions in writing and referencing; and the ability to come up with practical recommendations. The course further fosters the proper conduct of research and academic honesty and responsible conduct of scholarship important to the career and academic success.

The BS English Capstone Project has allocated 6 credit hours to be approved by the department and university because of the intensive time that is required for independent research, work, and writing within the course. The students are expected to spend a substantial amount of time and effort throughout the semester(s) of their project working on their plans, making them drafts, revising/redoining them and consolidating them. This course demands a very high degree of personal discipline and self-motivation on the part of the student and is intellectually demanding. Students are expected to be autonomous, research-oriented and problem-solving individuals and students under university supervision. They are not only subjects who are taught.

There are demanding academic requirements associated with this course. Students must provide original applied work that is focused on the critical use of sources, clear and coherent expression of their positions, organization of ideas and adherence to the assigned structure and referencing style. Capstone project should show evidence of depth of analysis, reinforce an awareness of methods, demonstrate practical insight and exhibit integrity of research and should not consist of a collection of information. As such, the student is expected to take this course very seriously, with a deep sense of commitment and respect for academic and professional standards.

2. Compulsory Academic Activities

As part of the BS English Capstone Project (6005), participation in structured academic activities is mandatory and forms an essential part of the project development process. In order to ensure that students are systematically guided and well prepared to conduct independent applied research, a six-day capstone workshop is formally organized by the department. Attendance in this workshop is mandatory for all students enrolled in the course.

The workshop is organized for six consecutive days for which a designated resource person interacts with the students for two hours per day. The aim of this workshop is to offer ample and practical guidance at all major phases of the capstone process. During these sessions, students are guided through selecting and refining research topics, formulating research objectives and research questions, understanding capstone report structure, conventions of

academic writing, ethical research practices and the specific demands of applied, problem-oriented inquiry. Special emphasis is laid on the need for proposed topics to address real-world problems within the domain of English studies and to be realistic in the context of the academic time available.

Workshop Attendance Requirement: Only students with at least 70% attendance in the workshop shall be permitted to submit their capstone project via the Learning Management System (LMS). Four out of six days of attendance is the minimum requirement for eligibility.

In addition to serving as resource person during the workshop, the resource person also serves as supervisor for the duration of the capstone project. This supervisory role remains in effect until the final submission of the project on the LMS. The supervisor's main academic duties consist of approving the topic of research, observing the general direction of the research work and revising the content produced by students in order to determine whether it conforms to the necessary academic standards for the purpose of assessment and grading. The supervisor gives constructive comments for the improvement of clarity, coherence, appropriateness of methods and the project's academic and practical aspects.

However, the supervisory role is restricted to clearly defined academic boundaries. The supervisor is not responsible for generating plagiarism reports or detection of AI plagiarism for students. Since the project is submitted with a Declaration of Originality, the responsibility of ensuring academic honesty rests solely with the student. If students use artificial intelligence tools, they should do so in a responsible and ethical way, ensuring that any AI-assisted content is within the permissible limits as prescribed by HEC policy followed by Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU). Similarly, students must ensure that their work is free from any plagiarism and follows institutional standards before submission.

There is a need for good communication between the student and supervisor to ensure the successful completion of the project. It is therefore the students' responsibility to maintain regular communication during the analysis of the information and production of the report. Communication should be maintained via officially approved communication channels

(WhatsApp or Email etc.) as supervisor decides. The student is responsible for requesting feedback time and appropriately responding to feedback received from the supervisor and for submitting drafts to the supervisor as directed by the supervisor.

Poor attendance of the required workshop or inadequate communication with the supervisor may adversely affect progress, evaluation or approval of the project. The academic activities are designed to support the students, to standardize the research in its quality and to uphold academic honesty. Students will therefore be expected to be an active, responsible members in the required academic components of the BS English Capstone Project course.

3. Topic Selection

Topic selection and choosing of an appropriate topic for the capstone project (6005) is one of the most important steps since it ultimately dictates the direction, relevance and practicality of the entire project. Students should select a topic that is original, researchable, discipline appropriate and is achievable within the time frame. In order to guarantee coherence in both the academic nature and the disciplinary area, the students are required to select the topic of their project from the one of the following areas: English Language Teaching (ELT), Applied Linguistics, Language Policy and Planning, Translation Studies, Discourse Studies, English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

In each of the domains, students should be aware of current issues in the academics, emerging lines of research and areas of unmet professional practice. General topics, where there are no real-life applications or topics which are too theoretical, where information is easily available in generic online format are discouraged. Capstone is designed to culminate in an original applied work at the undergraduate level that will tackle a problem in the real world that can be identified.

3.1 Domain-Specific Guidance

English Language Teaching (ELT): Working with current issues, classroom practices, learner issues, teacher beliefs, institution issues, the topics should be based on an authentic language classroom situation and should draw upon developments in language pedagogy.

Suitable subject areas are teachers' attitudes towards technology-assisted language learning, challenges of teaching English online in undergraduate education, effectiveness of task-based learning in ESL classroom in a certain institution, students' perception in formative assessment in ESL classroom and impact of blended learning on reading comprehension in public-sector college. The overall subject area(s) like 'teaching English in Pakistan' need to be particularized in terms of level of education, institutional context, skill area or pedagogy of teaching English.

Applied Linguistics: The choice of topic must be related to some empirical data of language or systematic analysis of texts in an authentic setting. Suitable fields are, for example, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, pragmatics, corpus linguistics, psycholinguistics or digital discourse studies. Topics should be related to communication issues in the real world. For instance politeness strategies in courtroom discourse of Pakistani English; representation of language and gender identity in Pakistani Twitter accounts; representation of social actors in newspaper editorials on education policy; or attitudes of the university students to English-medium instructions. In narrowing, the researcher determine the linguistic phenomenon that will be observed in a specific social phenomenon which is accompanied by data and analytical models.

Language Policy and Planning / ESP / Translation Studies: Students may explore practical issues in the context of language policy and planning, ESP and translation studies in institutional, professional or governmental settings. These are some examples like analysis into the implementation of language policy in institutions of higher education; problems of legal translation in lower courts or needs analysis for business English in a particular corporate sector.

3.2 Narrowing the Topic

Each topic should be discussed with students who would like to study it and need to specify the research focus and certify that the research is manageable in scope and that there is relevant data and tools available for the research. In having a topic narrowed down, it should clearly define: (a) what is being studied, (b) what setting in the real world is it studying, (c) how is it being studied and (d) why is it being studied (what is its use). It is

strongly recommended that students must consult with the supervisor during the workshop stage to ensure that the suggested topics are relevant, original and academically feasible before the topic is approved.

3.3 Topic Approval Process

Ultimately, the decisions of the research topic are the responsibility of the supervisor and the supervisor must ensure that the research topic is within the approved domain and/or within academic standards and appropriate for the undergraduate-level assessment. Within a period of fifteen days after the workshop the student should submit the completed topic including a brief one-page synopsis for formal approval. One synopsis will consist of:

- Student's details (Name, ID, Email, Phone number, Semester, Program, Supervisor)
- Topic/Title of the Capstone Project
- Objectives
- Research Questions/Hypotheses
- Brief description of population, sample, and research context

Student should be aware of the approval of the topic based on careful consideration of originality, topic scope and research value. If there is a need to adjust the topic after being granted, formal re-approval is necessary.

4. Structure of the Capstone Project Report

Based on assessment requirements and to ensure uniformity and clarity, the BS English Capstone Project (6005) must be conducted in a standard Academic format. The report should be a scholarly work and should closely follow the required format, consisting of three parts: preliminary pages, text and appendices (where applicable). The prescribed structure must be followed; otherwise, the work may be negatively evaluated or not accepted. All sections of the report should be in APA 7th edition format with Times New Roman font. There will be 1.5 lines of spacing, font size 12 and 1 inch margins on all sides unless otherwise specified. Paper should be A4.

4.1 Preliminary Pages

The preliminary pages are an integral part of the report and act as a formal introduction to the report. The whole text should be in formal academic writing style and the pages should be numbered, humbly starting at the page containing the text, not the "Title" page and using lower case Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, etc.).

All preliminary pages are to be typed in the Times New Roman font with headings being 12-point, bold and text being 12-point, regular font, using APA 7th edition formatting conventions.

4.1.1 Title Page

The first page is a title page that includes:

- Full title of the capstone project (The Capstone Project will be titled)
- Student's full name
- Student ID / Registration Number
- Program name (BS English)
- Course Code: 6005
- Department of English
- Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad

4.1.2 Declaration of Originality

This page will state that the work submitted is original and not plagiarized or submitted elsewhere. It also admits liability for ethical utilization of references and AI tools based on the policy of AIOU. This is a declaration to be signed by the student.

Sample Declaration:

I, _____, son/daughter of _____, Roll Number/ID: _____, a student of the BS English Program, do hereby declare that the Capstone Project submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the BS English program is my original work and has not been submitted or published earlier. I solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted for obtaining any other degree from this or any other University or Institution.

I also understand the plagiarism policy of AIOU and HEC and if any work is found to be plagiarized or copied from someone else's work at any stage, even after award of the degree, the work may be canceled and the degree may be revoked.

I further declare that I have used artificial intelligence (AI) tools, if any, only in an ethical and responsible manner, within the permissible limits prescribed by HEC and AIOU policy and that the final project represents my own intellectual effort and critical analysis.

Date: _____

Name of the student: _____

Signature: _____

4.1.3 Acknowledgement (Optional)

This section enables students to recognize academic and/or personal support during the research. It should be concise and respectful.

4.1.4 Abstract

The abstract is a brief (150-250 words) summary of the entire project. It is a brief statement/monograph of research problem, research objectives, method, main results, conclusions and practical suggestions.

4.1.5. List of Tables & List of Figures

These pages contain a list of pages and table numbers containing the whole list of pages that have tables and figures, along with their titles. Spacing: 1.5 lines, Times New Roman, 12 point.

4.1.6 Table of Contents

All chapters and sections are followed by all page numbers which are included in the table of contents. Format: 12-point, Times New Roman, Chapter titles should be bold.

5. Structure of the Report (Main Chapters)

The primary part of the BS English Capstone Project (6005) contains five basic chapters. Each chapter should cover a coherent, logically ordered and sound method of achieving a unique academic goal. Students are advised to arrange the headings and subheadings accordingly to achieve uniformity and academic clarity.

5.1 Chapter One: Introduction

The conceptual and practical basis of the whole project is made available in the Introduction chapter. It provides the context, describes the real issues and gives a clear description of where the research will go in terms of problem, objectives and research area. The introduction starts from the general knowledge of the field to the specific practical topic on which the research is based; it needs to indicate that the research is necessary and it will make a significant contribution to the solution of a real-life problem.

The Introduction chapter should be written in the following format: Times New Roman font in 12-point size, 1.5 spacing (line spacing) and utilize the heading formatting of APA 7th edition. The following subheadings must be present in the order given below:

5.1.1 Background of the Study

The Background is the setting or context of the research. It raises the general academic and professional realm, and focuses on a specific practical concern being investigated. This should cover key themes, new developments or institutional changes related to the subject, citing recent academic publications to introduce the topic and show that the researcher is acquainted with the field. In giving background information students should not provide too much detail; the background should provide a "set-up" for identifying the research problem.

5.1.2 Statement of the Problem

The statement of the problem is one of the most important elements. It clearly identifies a real world problem, gap in practice or fault in research literature addressed by the study. This section needs to be logical from the general background to the accurate problem that can be researched. A good problem statement makes clear the limitations that currently exist in practice or in scholarship. It should be clear, specific and backed up with evidence. The students should not make general or well broaden affirmations, they should make the problem achievable in the range of a capstone project of undergraduate student

5.1.3 Significance Of the study:

This portion of the document shows how the research is academically, practically and socially valuable. It asks who are the end users of the results (researchers, educators, policymakers, practitioners, institutions). A full explanation of what the research contributes to, or adds to, the class's existing knowledge, or how it helps to solve the problem should be provided. The meaning should be feasible and directly relevant to the research problem and goals.

5.1.4 Research Objectives

The aim of the project is stated as research objective. They break the problem down into specific and actionable objectives and offer an action plan. Objectives should start with action verbs i.e., to examine, explore, analyze, investigate, evaluate, develop or propose. The number of research objectives should, generally, be from 2 - 4 and should relate directly to the research problem.

5.1.5 Research Questions

Research questions are connected directly with the aims of the research and reveal the question(s) the research aims to answer. The research questions must relate to the research objectives. Research questions are scientifically sound, researchable, clearly written and allow for empirical or textual analysis.

5.1.6 Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This section identifies who or what is included vs. excluded in the research. Delimitations are choices the researcher made for the purpose of this study, in regard to context, sample, theoretical foundation, time period, or sources of data. Stating delimitations clearly helps to set expectations of the reader and endows academic legitimization.

5.1.7 Organization of the Report

The last part of the first chapter provides a brief description of the report structure. It provides one or two sentences outlining what has been covered in each chapter as a way of guiding the reader.

5.2 Chapter Two: Literature Review

Literature Review chapter is a critical and systematic review of existing scholarly work, related to the selected topic. This chapter indicates that the researcher has background of previous research, theoretical approaches and method. The literature review is not just a summarizing exercise but to critically engage with already existing studies to find patterns, debates, gaps and limitations that justify the present study.

Students should access viable and up-to-date academic sources like peer-reviewed articles, scholarly books and research reports from authoritative sources. Generally, research dating from the last 5-7 years is preferred and over the last couple of years on contemporary topics. The literature should be organized by theme, theory or method.

An effective literature review places the present study in a discussion within the academic writing and profession. It shows the way earlier investigators have been dealing with related issues, what results have been reported and where gaps in the process have been found or some questions have not been answered. In applied projects this is often the study of empirical studies, research tools and analysis frameworks in similar real life settings.

5.2.1 Research Gap

One of the most important function of literature review is to recognize the gap identified in the research/practice. Students should explicitly indicate what has not been explored, what is unresolved or what is the drawback of existing research based on important studies.

Gaps can be at the context, population, theoretical, methodological or practice level; they can be at several levels.

5.3 Chapter Three: Research Methodology

The Research Methodology chapter explains in detail the research process undertaken and provides a fair description of the procedures followed in an effort to answer the research questions. This chapter establishes whether or not the study is credible, reliable and academic in nature. All methodological decisions need to be clearly motivated and at the same time in line with the goals of research and the recognized existing research gap.

The methodology chapter should have the following main headings listed in logical order:

5.3.1 Research Approach

This section determines what kind of study (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method) is being used. The researcher should give the reasons for using the given approach as outlined in the data collection and research problem. ELT and/or linguistics projects may involve qualitative, quantitative or mixed-method approaches depending on the research design.

5.3.2 Research Design

Research design is the overall framework of the research. This can include action research, case study, survey research, experimental design, ethnographic approach or textual/discourse analysis. Design should be appropriate to the domain, research questions. It should also outline how the study is organized from data collection to analysis.

5.3.3 Research Domain and Context

This is a section that provides clarification of the disciplinary area (ELT, Applied Linguistics etc.) and clarifies the context. In ELT, this typically applies to educational institutions, classrooms or learning environments. In the case of Linguistics, it might be communities or media or even textual corpora.

5.3.4 Source of Data / Corpus / Selecting Text

A description of the data used is required. Data in ELT can take the form of questionnaires, interviews, test, classroom observation or institutional documents. In Applied Linguistics,

this may be speech or writing data, or corpora and/or digital discourse. Criteria for selecting data must be carefully elaborated.

5.3.5 Sampling Technique

For studies involving participants or datasets, this section describes the sampling method (e.g., purposive, convenience, stratified, or random sampling). The size of the sample and the sampling methods should be specified and justified.

5.3.6 Research Instruments

This section will explain how the data was collected, such as through a questionnaire, interview protocol, observation checklist, analytical framework, and more. Students write about the development, modification or validation of these instruments and the relationship of these instruments to the research objective(s).

5.3.7 Data Collection Procedure

In this section, an overview of the process of data collection is given (time frame, forms of administration, issues in data collection, as consent and confidentiality). The process should be well explained so that it can be reproduced.

5.3.8 Data Analysis Techniques

Students need to talk about data that is collected and how the data is analyzed. The method of analysis could include thematic analysis, content analysis, discourse analysis, corpus analysis or statistical analysis depending on the project. It is important that the techniques should be consistent with the research questions.

5.3.9 Ethical Considerations

Topics such as informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality and responsible data handling are discussed in this section. If it fails to comply with institutional ethical principles, this should be clearly indicated.

5.3.10 Reliability, Validity, Trust worthiness

Finally, the methodology chapter needs to have a discussion about the rigor that the research demonstrates. Reliability and validity should be addressed for quantitative studies;

credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability for qualitative studies. Triangulation, pilot testing and reflexivity, where applicable, should be briefly explained.

5.4 Chapter Four: Data Analysis, Findings, and Discussion

This chapter displays and discusses the results of the research. It reports the answers to the research questions by analyzing the data (or text material) within the analytics specified in the methodology chapter. Analysis should be systematic and well-organized, with appropriate examples, quotations, tables and/or figures as needed.

For the ELT studies, this chapter could be descriptive statistics, thematization of the responses or observation data. For linguistic research it could mean linguistic patterns, linguistic features in discourse or quantitative findings. The discussion should relate study results with the literature learned in Chapter Two where similarities, differences and new insights as a result of the study are highlighted. Students should clearly talk about how the findings relate to the problem that was discovered in Chapter One of the real world problem.

5.6 Chapter Six

The concluding part summarizes the results of the activities and project and concludes the project. It is used to recount the research problem, highlight key findings and explicate how the research goals are met. The chapter also covers the implications of the study, as well as practical and actionable recommendations for practitioners/institutions or policymakers available on the basis of the discussed study.

It is important that the conclusion does not introduce new data or analysis, but rather constitutes a critical evaluation of work overall. It helps to validate the contribution of the project in the selected field. Recommendations should be specific, achievable and directly proficient from the findings.

5.7 References

The cited references should be given in APA 7th edition style.

6. Academic Integrity and Ethics Standards.

Academic integrity is the basis for scholarly research and an integral part of the credibility of the BS English Capstone Project (6005). Students must adhere to the highest possible standards in research and writing processes within the context of honesty, responsibility and transparency. The project must be the intellectual creation of the student, and their own original work, arising from their exploration and study of what others have written and how they may ethically conduct research.

Plagiarism is the act of using ideas, words, data, or intellectual results of another without due acknowledgment and is one of the most serious breaches of academic integrity that can be found. Plagiarism can be intentional or unintentional and can entail copying and pasting material from another source without giving credit to that source, paraphrasing material from another student or source without giving credit to that source, using work of another student or source without giving it credit to that source, or using a student's own work without giving credit to that source. Ideas may be restated in the same style; however, citation must be done properly. APA 7th edition guidelines should be followed in all citations of borrowed material.

Responsible citation practices is closely related to plagiarism. Good referencing practices allow readers to follow to sources, scrutinize arguments and check assertions. Ethics of Citation requires you to credit all your sources, anything from books to Internet resources, from journal articles to digital resources. Failure to cite properly, the use of false information or intentional quotation of individual sources with a different purpose of changing the meaning of the author(s) are violations of due process and academic dishonesty and may be subject to penalties.

In the age of digitalization, students are also expected to be aware of the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools responsibly and ethically. AI tools can be helpful with editing or organizing ideas but it's crucial to remember that AI-generated content should not replace the original thought, analysis and authorship. The over reliance on AI will result in content that cannot be deemed as a student's own writing or critical thinking and will be considered academic dishonesty. Students will be required to adhere to the acceptable limits of AI

usage as outlined in the AIOU policy and it will be their responsibility to ensure that work presented is their own.

The originality is an essential basic demand. Originality does not mean that the research is entirely new or original; it means that within a clearly defined research area, the research contains independent analysis, interpretation and/or application of theory. Originality can be shown by the use of a topical theme, by a new practical approach, by analysis of new data or by solving a context not fully investigated. Replication of a prior study and/or analyses that are substantially copied from a popular internet source should be avoided.

The student will submit a Declaration of Originality in order to formally declare project 's originality. The student will hold themselves alone responsible for the content, whether from personal intellectual resources or generated using AI technology, as well as for the plagiarism-free and responsible use of AI. This declaration is a legally binding statement that the work submitted is original, acknowledges the work of others and has been undertaken in keeping with institutional rules.

If the student chooses to participate in academic dishonesty, it is his or her responsibility. Academic guidance and feedback will be provided by the supervisor and it is not the responsibility of the supervisor to create plagiarism/AI detection reports. Violation of the Ethic Rules at any stage of the evaluation process may result into penalty as per the University Rules as it might be decided and among those penalty may include rejection of the project.

8. Guidelines for Providing comments on Evaluations

The BS English Capstone Project (6005) must be submitted through the Learning Management System (LMS) following the same pathways that the student would use for other assignments at the University. Students must submit the final and full-text version of the report on a date officially scheduled for the report being submitted. The late submission may lead to a loss of points or rejection of themes in compliance with the University regulations.

Maximum Duration: The maximum time to finish the Capstone Project shall not exceed 4 months after the end of the workshop.

Submission Formats: The student will submit the final version of the work fully formatted in both pdf and MS Word formats to the Program Coordinator / on the LMS portal.

Project will be evaluated as an academic process upon submission by authorized evaluators/examiners. Evaluators will perform and document a text similarity analysis using Turnitin or other approved similarity checking software as part of this process to identify textual similarity and/or connectivity between the document and AI-generated content. This assessment is intended to meet the criteria for conformity to the institutional standards of originality, ethical research and responsible academic writing practice.

This includes making students aware that there exist clearly stated allowable limits for similarity index or AI-generated content (University policy). If the similarity index is more than 19% or if there are indications of AI-produced content that is beyond the acceptable limit, the project may be sent back for correction or academic investigations. Students may be subject to educational sanctions based on University regulations under the above conditions.

Pre-Submission Responsibility: The sole responsibility for ensuring that the project meets originality and ethical standards belongs to the student and the student is solely responsible for meeting these standards. The responsibility of check and similarity/ AI detection reports, when finalizing, is not shifted to the supervisor(s). By submitting the paper through LMS, the student will symbolically signify his whole responsibility for the contents of the paper by also signing the Declaration of Originality.

Evaluation Criteria: Several aspects are considered, such as the relevance of the selected issue in relation to the research, the clarity of the research purpose and the appropriateness of the research approach/method, its analysis, the consistency of the evidence/arguments, its conformity with APA style 7th edition, and its adherence to ethical considerations. Projects will only be accepted for grading when they meet the grade level academic requirements and ethical standards.

Assessment Breakdown:

- Project Report: 70% of total marks
- Viva / Oral Presentation: 30% of total marks
- Passing Marks: A minimum score of 50 out of 100 is required to pass.

Viva Requirement: The student may be required to present the research over the internet to the supervisor who will give them a grade for this component prior to the final submission of the research. Students can be provided with time for improvement or revision after the presentation if necessary, and agreed to by the supervisor, by allowing for this before final upload to the LMS.

8. Style and Formatting Guidelines (APA 7th Edition)

A key part of academic writing and writing ethically is to properly reference and cite. The students should use the American Psychological Association (APA) writing style of the 7th edition referencing system consistently throughout the BS English Capstone Project (6005). The 7th edition adopts an author-date system of citations, which assists readers in easily locating the reference information sources cited within the text as well as the corresponding full reference list information at the end of the text. Using APA style correctly places a credit on others' work, protects students from plagiarism, and provides credibility to students' research.

The in-text citations must follow the APA 7th edition format, as well as the reference list. Each piece of information from any source cited within the text should appear in the reference list, and each source cited in the reference list should be indicated in the text.

8.1 In-Text Citations (Author–Date System)

In-text citations for APA 7th edition usually include the surname of the author and the year of publication. If a direct quotation is included, the page number must be included as well. The in-text citation should be simple and flow smoothly within the text.

Single-author source: Language plays a central role in shaping social identity (Fairclough, 2015). Fairclough (2015) argues that language functions as a form of social practice.

Two-author source: Code-switching reflects complex social meanings in multilingual contexts (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2008).

Three or more authors: Digital discourse has transformed patterns of language use (Herring et al., 2020).

Direct quotation (fewer than 40 words): According to Crystal (2019), 'language on the internet is characterized by creativity and hybridity' (p. 45).

Block quotation (40 words or more): Indent the quotation, double space, and do not use quotation marks. Place the citation after the punctuation.

8.2 Secondary Citations

Students are advised to use the original texts wherever suitable. If, however, a source is cited within a source, and the original source cannot be located, then a secondary citation can be used:

Saussure's concept of the linguistic sign emphasizes arbitrariness (as cited in Lyons, 2016). Only the source actually consulted (Lyons, 2016) should appear in the reference list.

8.3 Reference List: General Guidelines

The reference list is set at the end of the report on the new page labeled with the word "References" centered, in bold. Entries to be made in alphabetic order of the first authors name. The hanging indent will be set on 0.5 inches (Numbers do not fill the tab.) Use Times New Roman, 12-point font, double spacing.

For those that have them, include DOIs (Digital Object Identifiers) in APA 7th edition. Retrieval date is only needed for content that is subject to change over time; URLs for online sources are required.

8.4 Reference List Entries for a Sample

Book (Single Author): Fairclough, N. (2015). Language and power (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Book (Two Authors): Gumperz, J. J., & Cook-Gumperz, J. (2008). Discourse and identity. Cambridge University Press.

Edited Book Chapter: Herring, S. C. (2018). Digital discourse analysis. In D. Tannen, H. E. Hamilton, & D. Schiffrin (Eds.), *The handbook of discourse analysis* (pp. 127–142).

Wiley Blackwell.

Journal Article: Hyland, K. (2017). Metadiscourse and academic writing. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 30(2), 1–14.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2017.09.001>

Online / Electronic Document: American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.).
<https://apastyle.apa.org>

Newspaper or Online Article: Rahman, T. (2021, March 12). Language policy and education in Pakistan. *Dawn*. <https://www.dawn.com>

8.5 Importance of Consistent Referencing

Consistent and accurate use of APA 7th edition referencing not only contributes to the academic quality of the project but also demonstrates the researcher's ethical responsibility. By citing properly, students enable their readers to check their sources, substantiate their arguments with scholarly support, and show that they are reading and interacting with others. Sources should be cross-referenced as well as cited and this is encouraged.

8.6 Further Sources for APA 7th Edition Updates and Guidance

Authoritative outside sources are encouraged where students will be able to find detailed clarification, updates and examples. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition) is the best reference. APA Style has helpful quick-reference guides, sample papers, electronic sources, and even clarifications regarding content from AI and APA Style. The University of Purdue has a good site for theses and dissertations (and others) with examples, and there are many other sites like this that are reputable.

With the use of a citation generator or reference management software (Zotero, Mendeley), students will need to check and adjust the generated citations to meet APA 7th edition

standards. Outdated guidelines on referencing or websites such as blogs or non-academic sites that are frequently used is not acceptable for students.

9. Concluding Note

The BS English Capstone Project (6005) is a major academic accomplishment and an expression of the student's ability in performing independent applied research and problem solving in the real-world. It signifies not only knowledge in the subject area but critical thinking, methodological awareness, ethical responsibilities, practical insights, and academic maturity as well.

For students it is emphasized that the capstone project is not just another requirement for graduation but a project where an intellectual discussion is a meaningful exploration of one's vocation, coursework and interests. An effort to be academically honest, original, to follow disciplined research practices and to work in a practical problem solving manner is required to produce a credible and valuable scholarly work. In compliance with this manual, students take part in the development of an academic research culture and develop a strong base for future professional careers and/ or postgraduate studies.

Ultimately, this capstone project serves as a transition point between educational and working environments, as proof that the student can apply the body of work and abilities of the BS in English to improve a real world situation.